






Great Massingham Locum Parish Clerk: Ms Amy Hart
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Minutes of GM Parish Council monthly meeting, business conducted at Great Massingham Village Hall on February 16th, 2026, at 19:30.

- 1. Present:** Kevin Hobart (Chair), Cllr Alexis Brun, Cllr Peter James, Cllr Pete Harries, Cllr Oliver Locke, Cllr Sue Nash, Cllr Kim Frazer, Cllr Maria West and BCKLWN Cllr Alistair Beales with four members of the public in attendance.

Apologies: Cllr Robin Arbenz & NCC Cllr Stuart Dark.

- 2. Minutes** (of the 19th January 2026 meeting) Proposer (of the minutes) Cllr Harries, Seconded by Cllr James with no corrections.

- Cllr Beales arrived at 7:38pm

3. Public Questions

A Resident noted concern as to the Epicormic/basal growth of Horse Chestnut Tree over the pit (Abbey Road/bench side), the Resident noted that this tree is becoming overgrown and encroaching the road. Locum Clerk to follow up with Houghton & request annual Tree Survey report. The Resident further raised concerns about dead vegetation & litter surrounding the pit. Cllr James to follow up maintenance with Volunteers in the coming months.

A Resident referencing planning ref: **25/01974/F** cited the following concerns regarding BCKLWN Planning decision to approve:

- BCKLWN Planning had confirmed mixed, as opposed to Evergreen hedging, the latter option previously supported by nearby Residents.
- The enforceability of overnight parking in the area and headlights seen through neighbouring house windows at unsociable hours. Cllr Harries re-confirmed that the locking of the gate, was a noted Fire Risk and would impede emergency service access. Cllr Nash suggested that (though not enforceable), cars staying overnight could respectfully stay in the first carpark, rather than use the overflow.
- Altered look of overflow car park field, with 'before & after' photographs circulated.

Action: KH (Chair) to meet with DD Owners to request update in the coming weeks.

4. Declarations of Interest

-KH (Chair) declared an interest in Owen Cole Close cutting proposal & would not take part in any voting.

-Cllr Frazer declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 10.c. See below.

5. Health & Safety

Reminder: Cllr Locke to check when Defib pads were last replaced. No further updates.

6. Planning

Application Number: **25/01974/F** (*for information only*) Proposal: Overflow car park (retrospective) Location: The Dabbling Duck, 11 Abbey Road, Great Massingham. Planning Committee meeting 02/02/2026, King's Lynn Town Hall, Doors open at 9am. (To register to speak call 01553 616879 or email borough.planning@west-norfolk.gov.uk).

Reminder: BCKLWN Planning approved the application at the meeting (above) of 02/02/2026. No further updates.

7. UPDATES ON ACTIONS REQUIRED FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

1) Swims behind 49-53 Station Road

Clerk has progressed Fishing Warden JD with thanks to advice of Ex Chair of Downham Market Anglers Assoc/ Angler, Mr Wilton. Thanks go to Mr Wilton.

Action: KH (Chair) to progress in due course and before end of fishing season.

- Reminder: Cllr Nash gave notice as Fishing Warden Liaison. Cllr Nash to pass receipts, any withheld monies to KH (Chair) with immediate effect for safekeeping in interim, Clerk to place Cllr Vacancy on February's agenda. Thanks go to Cllr Nash for undertaking this role to date. Cllr Robin Arbenz is confirmed as new Fishing Warden Liaison

2) GMPC Precept application submitted & receipt confirmed 2026/27.

Locum Clerk HAS confirmed BCKLWN Finance, who confirmed receipt on 22/01/2026.

3) Village Green land at Weasenham Road / Land Registry.

Cllr Brun noted discussion with Hays & Storr Litigation Team, and further confirmation with Resident not wishing for professional survey. Cllr Brun confirmed areas to register at Land Registry by 24 Weasenham Rd, Rectory Road & Airfield. Cllr Brun confirmed as Lead Person/project Liaison. Approx cost proposal £500 - £600 for registration, to approve in March meeting. Note: The 1976 (?) deed of dedication, Holkham donated Land with documents, but did not have Land Registered with Registry at the time of dedication.

For boundary map, contact the Clerk.

4) Fishing warden job description & Cllr Fishing Warden Liaison vacancy (see point 7.1)

5) Village Noticeboard repair for damage and quote, (under Crime Reference Number 36/434/26). 'Before & After' photo requested. Replacement pinboard needed. TD Build quote £1,092.00.

Clerk to follow up second quote with MG and 'before' image with Greenbarnes to progress claim. KH (Chair) confirmed stronger base bolts were needed to repair.

8. REPORTS

- **Highways**

Cllr James noted that WTRO6331 had been completed and cited concern that the reinstated footpath be made as safe as possible for Wheelchair users. Cllr West was also concerned at road surfacing for Wheelchair, Zimmer frame and buggy users. Locum Clerk to request update from Cllr Dark.

- **Village Hall**

Cllr James gave thanks for the donation of Parish boards to GMPC, to be utilised for events.

- **Great Massingham School**

- Cllr Frazer to set up meeting with Exec Head for update. No new updates.

- **Biodiversity**

Note: Cllr Locke will circulate draft document regarding evaluations of land responsibility for any forthcoming Biodiversity work to defer to March meeting.

- **The Mallard**

- KH (Chair) gave thanks to Beverly for compiling March edition but confirmed the need to discuss the options for a longer-term solution.

Note: This would need to be paid on a similar term as Clerk (addendum of 1st Dec 2024) and with Microsoft withdrawing Publisher from October 26. Alternative software options would be needed. There is an opportunity for a facelift for the design.

- KH requested that Cllr Nash, Cllr James or Cllr Arbenz take on interim chair role for the subgroup. Subgroup to progress decisions.

- **Ponds**

Cllr James confirmed that works to the ponds will commence when water level is lower. Rocks would need to replace the gap in the flints in the interim. Note: 4 choir rolls remain to build up bank.

- **Village Greens**

Cllr Brun confirmed a 'phased approach' of 4-6 signs on discreet A4 dark green 'Heritage Noticeboards' with wording '*To Protect the Village Greens, no parking in this area. Thank you. GMPC*' in identified areas that regularly suffer the greatest damage due to parking. The Locum Clerk noted that this was not a blanket action against all greens parking.

Cllr Brun proposed a total cost of £250 for signs (£100) and £150 for installation. Seconder Cllr Harries. All in favour. To defer to March meeting.

LOCATIONS (What 3 Words)

Area 1: <https://w3w.co/placed.confused.showrooms>

Area 2: <https://w3w.co/cuts.armrests.saying>

Area 3: <https://w3w.co/inkjet.warrior.sideboard>

Area 4: <https://w3w.co/loom.rests.referral>

Cllr Brun proposed a total cost of £250 for signs (£100) and £150 for installation. Seconder Cllr Harries. All in favour. To defer to March meeting.

- A Resident asked whether there would be a 2 m gap between the Highway and the proposed signage. Cllr Brun confirmed that the signs would be outside that area.

Reminder: Cllr James proposed a 'FREE PARKING IN THE VILLAGE HALL CARPARK' Poster in the PC noticeboard to reduce greens parking.

Chair asked Locum Clerk to invite Highways to meet to discuss posts and ideas for Abbey Road to prevent cars mounting the newly repaired path

- **Play Area**

Cllr Harries updated that the under 5's play area had started on 16/02/2026 and would be circa 3-4 weeks until completion.

KH (Chair) requested an update on funding. Cllr Harries confirmed that 25K had been paid from GMPC reserve.

Lottery & Council would repay within fifteen days of receipt of invoice, but this would be exc. VAT, and a VAT 126 claim would need to be progressed.

Remaining HTB funds to be transferred to Unity Trust saving account. Note:

Locum Clerk confirmed the need for 1) Unique Council Reference code 2) the last date of VAT 126 return & 3) all invoices to submit to HMRC from last submission date to progress a new return.

SH (Clerk) updated with the following, written report: *"I have received final confirmation from HTB that the mandate has been updated, the new signatories being Kevin, Peter and Sue. It was agreed at the September meeting that £50,000 should be placed in the HTB 1 Year SME Fixed Saver Account and the remaining sum, £29,394.76 should be placed in the Unity Trust Bank Instant Access Savings Account. In order for this to be executed two signatories will need to contact HTB (this can be done separately or at the same time) to request that, the Council wishes to open the 1 Year SME Fixed Saver Account (AER 4.55%) - [Fixed Rate SME Accounts | Hampshire Trust Bank \(HTB\)](#) and that we wish to transfer £50,000 from our HTB Easy Access Business Account (Account No: 11107066) into this new account and that the Council also wishes to transfer the remaining sum in the HTB Easy Access Business Account (Account No: 11107066), which should be £29,394.76, in to our Instant Access Savings Account with Unity Trust Bank (Account No: 20480121, Sort Code: 608301)"*

KH (Chair) proposed that to update the Unity Trust mandate, that Cllr Harries be added as Signatory to the Unity Trust Account, to view and authorise payments. All in agreement.

- **Allotment Association**

Thanks go to Sue Donnolly for taking up the role of Secretary, following the recent resignation of Lisa Hobart. Thanks also go to Lisa Hobart for her work to date.

- **NDP**

Jessica Cunningham (Chair of the GMPNDP Committee) submitted a written plan for the year ahead as follows:

- 2nd March - The NDP group is preparing for its next Community Conversation in March which will consider Energy Infrastructure (Solar and Wind) to gather input to influence local and national energy-related projects within our Parish and seek the best outcome for the community. Banner and Posters have gone up around the Village
- NDP Health Check, the NDP is working with a Planning Consultant to undertake a Health Check of the work to date and seek advice on any gaps in the work, and next steps. A meeting will take place in March and Jessica will update.
- In April, depending on the results of the Health Check, the NDP Steering Group aim to present a Draft NDP document to the Parish Council for review and comment with a view to presenting a document to the Borough Council to start the formal process to referendum, which is anticipated to be after the summer.

- **9. BCKLWN**

- Cllr. Beales confirmed that a letter, personally thanking the Clerk, Sarah Harvey for her seven years of continuous service and dedication to the Village had been sent to Sarah.
- Cllr Beales attended the Dabbling Duck planning meeting of 02/02/2026 and delivered his presentation balancing Resident concerns with the planning needs of this local business. Contact the Clerk for the written presentation.
- Following a welcome revision from Central Government, that local elections would now be held in May 2026. Following recent welcome changes to the funding settlement for local councils by Government, Cllr. Beales was pleased to report that the Borough Council budget for 2026/27 is in much better shape than feared. However, he highlighted a recent report from the Rural Services Network which reveals that urban councils receive 32% more Govt. funding per head than rural councils and as a consequence, rural residents pay on average, 17% more Council Tax.
- Funding for Village Green signs could be sought via the NCC Community Fund, or NCC ring-fenced community funding via Cllr Dark.
- Cllr. Beales reported that he had been in contact with Cllr Dark, who in turn, had been in touch with Highways/Residents regarding Castle Acre Road footpath and would update in due course.
- Reminder: KH (Chair) asked if any delay in local elections would impact Parish Councils. Cllr Beales requested an update from Electoral Services, who confirmed: *“Parish Council elections would take place in May 2027 as usual, but following confirmation of the Unitary Authority, that elections could potentially be subject to change to fit in with any revised election schedule of the Unitary Authority.”*
- **NCC**
- No new updates.

10. MATTERS REQUESTED BY COUNCILLORS

- a) Signing of Tripartite Deed of Dedication between GM VH, GM PC and The Big Lottery Fund by two presiding Cllrs and Clerk. Note: Approx costs from Wellers & Hedley £1950 + VAT.

Cllr Harries updated that following the £140K NLF win that the deed would, in simple terms mean the Playground would stay a Playground and the land is not re-developed for any other purposes. Locum Clerk & 2 Cllrs signed. Cllr Locke to progress signing with Chair & Vice Chair of VH.

- b) Proposal for GMPC to maintain Children's play area/grass cutting at Owen Cole Close

KH (Chair) delivered a proposal (as Resident) to request that GMPC cover a £700 annual cost (£50 per strim/cut) to cut the Children's playground at Owen Cole Close. The Chair absented himself from further discussions at 8:34pm.

Due to Cllr concern about a) cost, b) the rights of ALL local children to use the playground, or if the play area was c) ONLY for children of Owen Cole close. A further question arose as to property owner Residents of Owen Cole Close potentially needing updated addendums to Residents Property Title Deeds (which may or may not include the cost of maintenance) it was resolved to see if HHA (GMPC's regular contractor) may offer to cut at a lower rate, for consideration at the March meeting. It was further noted that Residents of Owen Cole close could have a rota. Cllr Beales confirmed that he had experience of setting up management companies such as may be in place at Owen Cole Close and it was usual that homeowners jointly owned the management company and could determine policy as they see fit. To illustrate the uses of such areas by the whole community elsewhere, Cllr Beales explained that in the absence of a management company, the Borough Council managed such areas and charged Special Expenses that are paid out of parish precepts.

Locum Clerk to contact HHA. To defer decision to March meeting.

KH (Chair) returned to the meeting at 8:45pm.

- c) Concern due to state of public access/footpath around Scotsman's Pit. Cllr Frazer (who declared an interest as Cllr) updated the Council as Resident, sharing concern as to hazardous pathway by the side of the driveway of Cobwebs Cottage. KF confirmed that this private driveway is currently being used by members of the public. One Resident stated that they nearly fell in by attempting not to use the driveway and by using the current pedestrian access as usual. It is noted that the pedestrian access route is narrow and has become increasingly hazardous & slippery due to the wet weather. Proposer (to request if Houghton could repair / inspect pathway) Cllr Harries, seconded by Cllr Brun. All in favour. Locum Clerk to progress.
- d) New signatory for GMPC Unity Trust account. Cllr Harries in agreement. Cllr Nash & Cllr James to co-sign change with Unity Trust.

- e) SSE energy account in dispute and under investigation ref: debit balance £4342.63. Request to submit up-to-date streetlight inventory to UK Powernetworks/SSE.
Locum Clerk has placed the account in dispute and requested that SSE call off BPO (debt collection) while the matter is investigated. Locum Clerk has requested all invoices be sent to home address and further proposed sending the 2025 streetlighting inventory, (which included a change from 43 High Power use Sodium bulbs to 16 LED since 2024) to UK Powernetworks/SSE to update expected kWh. All in agreement.
- f) Resignation of Clerk and confirmation of final day 09/03/2026
- HR issue discussed privately after main meeting.
- g) Pre School Land & Community Housing Proposal (Phase 2)
Cllr Harries proposed that the Parish Council move to Phase 2 of the Disposal of Land Behind the Surgery for Pre-school and Community Housing Project through the establishment of a Phase 2 Subgroup to progress the next stage of work and further ascertain the best value and best use of the site. Locum Clerk to update subgroup list and circulate.

11. CORRESPONDENCE

- a) Email received from NCC regarding Little Massingham WTRO6533 to repair burst water main. Anticipated closure times: 9th January – 29th January 2026. All Cllrs aware.
- b) Email received from NCC regarding Great Massingham WTRO6331 dated 06th January with potential extended closure date of 9th August 2026. Status: complete.
- c) Email received from Norfolk Constabulary on 02/01/2026 regarding confirmation of criminal damage to Village Noticeboard under crime ref number: 36/424/26. All Cllrs aware.
- d) Email received on 23/01/2026 from Wellers Law Group regarding Clause 4 of the National Lottery deed of dedication & approx. cost £1,950 +VAT to authorise the legal work. Cllr James requested consultation with the Surgery, to see if they wished to expand. Cllr Harries to follow up.
- e) Letter from The Drovers received on 18/12/2025 confirming acceptance of their DCO application by The Planning Inspectorate. Project information can be found here: [The Drovers Solar Farm - Project information advice on NSIP's](#) can be found here: [Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects: Advice pages - GOV.UK](#).
Locum Clerk updated that the preexamination phase is due to end by 27/02/2026 followed by a 6-month examination phase, which at the end, the Planning Inspector's recommendation (appointed by the Secretary of State) would be either approved or thrown out by the Secretary of State. Locum Clerk provided copies of the recent 70 page Soil & Agriculture study from IPG.
- f) Email received on 29/01/2026 from Electoral, via Cllr Beales regarding any potential delays to PC elections due to LGR (see point 9).
- g) Email & letter received on 30/01/2026 from BCKLWN regarding 'call for sites' for development. All Cllrs aware.

h) Email received on 04/02/2026 from Allotment Association confirming that Sue Donnelly will be stepping onto the position of Secretary, following the Resignation of previous Secretary.

i) Email of Resignation received on 09/02/2026 from Sarah Harvey and final day confirmation of 09/02/2026 – (point 10g).

j) Email received from SSE Sarah Bonas regarding complaint. Locum Clerk updated that CAPC’s Complaint Manager had been contacted regarding GMPC’s complaint and that the complain was sent to the Complaints Team, who will be in touch in due course.

k) Email received from UK Powernetworks on 12/02/2026 with certificate pack/MPAN’s and expected kWh based on old inventory – (see point 10.f) UK Powernetworks understand that GMPC’s expected kWh was based on an old inventory. Seasonal variation is now expected from SSE ½ hourly energy billing with January/February being peak. Cllr Harries to support this project.

12. ACCOUNTS

ITEM:	Cost to PC Budget:	Grant funded:
Clerk Salary Sarah Harvey Salary, Travel & Expense claim 1.Clerk/RFO 19/01/2026-15/02/2026 (8 hours p/w @£16.35) 2.Mallard/Village Website (15 hours pcm @£16.35) Income Tax: National Insurance: 3. Allowance (use of home office @£2.00 per week)	1.£566.80 2.£245.25 -£21.00 £0.00 3.£8.00 Total Due: £799.05	
Locum Clerk weekly w/c 26th Jan and w/c16th February Salary from (w/c 26/01/2026) @ £25 p/h *Week 3 (w/c 26th Jan) 8 hours *Week 4 (w/c 2nd Feb) 8 hours *Week 5 (w/c 9th Feb) 8 hours *Week 6 (w/c 16th Feb) 8 hours	Week 3: £200.00 Week 4: £200.00 Week 5: £200.00 Week 6: £200.00 Total Due: £800.00	
Cozens Inv-10230 ref: R226-03 11/02/2026 (Standard maintenance charge for February 2026)	Total: £45.00 VAT: £9.00 Total Due: £54.00	

Minuteman Press: The Mallard Magazine. Inv: 46730 (job 67955) Date: 27/01/2026 550 A5 Parish Magazines (February 2026) B&W, with colour outer cover.	Total: £156.00 VAT: NIL Total Due: £156.00	
Re-imburement to Joules Lodge for February Mallard Delivery	Total: £60.00 VAT: NIL Total Due: £60.00	
Inter-Logic Norfolk Limited. Inv: 7884 Date: 31/01/2026 Service: .net domain renewal from 31/01/2026 – 30/01/2026 (New bank details noted for BACS).	Total: £14.49 VAT: £2.90 Total Due: £17.39	
Capco Inv-23315 Massingham Adventure Play – Phase 1 20% due on commencement on site (Budget @ £70,000.00 + VAT) (Due: 24/02/2026)		Total: £14,000.00 VAT: £2,800.00 Total Due: £16,800.00 <i>(Grant fund confirmation transfer date required)</i>
Reimbursement to Kevin Hobart (Chair) re: Inv. IN13983 30/01/2026 Starlings of Swaffham (flowers for Sarah).	Total: £50.00 VAT: NIL Delivery Charge: £7.95 Total Due: £57.95	
SSE Inv: IV03800022 (for 01/11/2025 to 30/11/2025) BACS Inv structure identifier 8701182454 Balance brought forward from previous invoice: £2496.16 <i>(Account in dispute 06/02/2026)</i>	Total: £720.08 CCL: £13.20 VAT: £146.66 Total Due: £879.94	
Unity Trust banking charges (DD)	Total Due: £7.00	
Authorised for online payment by- Date: Signatory 1: Cllr Kevin Hobart Signatory 2: Cllr Sue Nash Signatory 3: Cllr Peter James		

Proposer (of the accounts to be paid) Cllr James, seconded by Cllr Frazer. All in favour.


NOTE: Any payments to consider under 1) Late Payment Act 1998 or 2) Section 137 emergency spending (£11.20 per elector).

*HMRC Employer NI Contribution, Sarah Harvey (Class 1 NIC) Reconciliation. Ref: 120 P X 002988366 Dated: 06/02/2026 Total: £392.63 VAT: £NIL Total Due: £392.63 (For period 05/10/2025 – 05/01/2026)

13. VILLAGE MAINTENANCE

*Reminder: Cllr James proposed that the Well would need checking and wood preservative applied in Spring, alongside a check of the placing. To defer to March 2026.

- The meeting was closed at 9:45pm

Next PC meeting  Monday 16th March 2026 at 19:30pm in the GM Village Hall.

Signed.....